

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

REC'D 06 APR 2005

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To:
TIM F. WILLIAMS
DORITY & MANNING, P.A.
P.O. BOX 1449
GREENVILLE, SC 29602

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year) **04 APR 2005**

FOR FURTHER ACTION

See paragraph 2 below

Applicant's or agent's file reference

MIC-87-PCT

International application No.

International filing date (day/month/year)

Priority date (day/month/year)

PCT/US04/26308

13 August 2004 (13.08.2004)

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC

IPC(7): B29C 35/04; B29D 30/06 and US Cl.: 264/40.1, 297.5, 326, 501; 425/17, 29, 34.3, 40

Applicant

MICHELIN NORTH AMERICA, INC.

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- ☐ Box No. II Priority
- ☐ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☐ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- ☐ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- ☐ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/ US

Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230

Authorized officer

James Mackey

Telephone No. 571-272-1700

Form PCT/ISA/237 (cover sheet) (January 2004)

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/US04/26308

Box No. I Basis of this opinion

1. With regard to the language, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

☐ This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).

2. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:

a. type of material

☐ a sequence listing

☐ table(s) related to the sequence listing

b. format of material

☐ in written format

☐ in computer readable form

c. time of filing/furnishing

☐ contained in international application as filed.

☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.

☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.

3. ☐ In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.

4. Additional comments:

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.
PCT/US04/26308

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43 bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims <u>1-30</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims <u>1-30</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims <u>1-30</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO

2. Citations and explanations:

Claims 1-30 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3), because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest an apparatus for curing tires including a chamber configured for containing a tire assembly, a heating unit for heating water and being in fluid communication with a heat exchanger in thermal communication with the chamber, an expansion tank in fluid communication with the heating unit and the pump, a water pressure sensor, and a valve connected fluidly between the heating unit and the expansion tank and configured for selectively diverting at least part of the flow from the heating unit to the expansion tank based on the measured pressure; also, the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest a method for curing tire assemblies including circulating heated water in a closed circuit through a heat exchanger in a chamber containing tire assemblies, measuring the pressure of the heated water, opening a control valve to divert the water to an expansion tank if the measured pressure is below the desired set-point pressure, and closing the control valve to prevent water from flowing to the expansion tank if the measured pressure is above the desired set-point pressure.

Claims 1-30 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(4), and thus have industrial applicability because the subject matter claimed can be made or used in industry.

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Name and mailing address of the ISA/ US

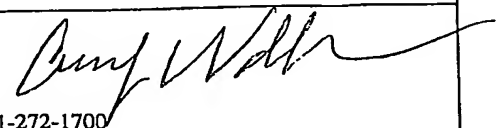
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